

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 02831 021911Z

73

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /032 W

----- 031600

R 021748Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 509

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 2831

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 2809 AND 2774

1. A JOINT COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THREE PRIESTS AND THE AUDITOR OF THE ARMED FORCES WAS SET UP BY THE GOVERNMENT TO LOOK INTO THE SITUATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF OLANCHO. THE COMMITTEE LEFT TEGUCIGALPA FOR OLANCHO ON JULY 1. ONE OF ITS MAJOR TASKS WILL BE TO TRY TO LOCATE TWO PRIESTS, JUAN BETANCOURT (COLUMBIAN) AND MICHAEL CYPHER (U.S.). THE CHURCH HIERARCHY IS EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT MAY HAVE HAPPENED TO THE TWO MEN.

2. THE FULL NAME OF THE U.S. PRIEST IS MICHAEL JEROME ATYPHER WHO IS ALSO KNOWN AS PADRE CASIMIRO. THERE ARE MANY RUMORS CIRCULATING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM. UNOFFICIAL REPORTS STATE HE WAS ATTACKED, BEATEN AND ARRESTED ON JUNE 25. LATER REPORTS STATE HE ESCAPED FROM CUSTODY OR WAS KILLED. THE CONSUL LEFT A LETTER WITH LT. COLONEL MADRID, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF FSP (NATIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLICE), ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 30. THE LETTER STATED

THAT THE EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED CONFLICTING REPORTS ABOUT  
THE U.S. PRIEST AND WOULD APPRECIATE FSP ACTION TO  
DETERMINE HIS WELFARE AND WHEREABOUTS. THE LETTER REQUESTED  
ALL POSSIBLE ACTION TO PROTECT HIM IF ALIVE AND, IF DEAD,  
A REPORT ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEATH.

3. THE EMBASSY IS ATTEMPTING TO ASCERTAIN FACTS IN  
CASE AND WILL KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED. HOPEFULLY THE  
JOINT COMMISSION WILL BE ABLE TO DETERMINE WHAT HAPPENED  
TO THE PRIESTS.  
SOWASH

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** WELFARE & WHEREABOUTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, INVESTIGATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 02 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975TEGUCI02831  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750229-1218  
**From:** TEGUCIGALPA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750790/aaaadcnd.tel  
**Line Count:** 72  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 TEGUCIGALPA 2809, 75 AND 2774  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 18 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <18 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <19 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

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EO Systematic Review  
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**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** ESTABLISHMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE  
**TAGS:** PINT, CASC, HO, US, CO, (BETANCOURT, JUAN), (CYPHER, MICHAEL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006